

Addendum to the USDA 2012 Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan: Responding to the Presidential Memorandum on Promotion of Biobased Markets

On February 21, 2012, President Obama signed a Memorandum, *Driving Innovation and Creating Jobs in Rural America through Biobased and Sustainable Product Procurement*. The memorandum requires USDA, as lead agency for the BioPreferred® program, to undertake a number of activities. USDA has moved aggressively since February to implement its parts of the Presidential Memorandum.

Accomplishments to Date

- Establishing a web-based tool to allow biobased product manufacturers to suggest new product categories for designation under the Federal procurement preference program.
- Publishing the Presidential Memorandum in the *Federal Register*.
- Updating web-based training on www.biopreferred.gov.
- Promulgating the Round 8 final rule designating 13 categories of biobased products for preferred procurement.
- Proposing amendments to existing BioPreferred program guidelines that will increase Federal procurement of biobased products.
- Meeting with Small Business Administration representatives to discuss ways the two agencies can work together to implement the Presidential Memorandum and increase small business participation in the program.
- Publishing the Round 9 proposed rule that will designate 12 additional categories of biobased products for preferred procurement; when finalized the proposed rule will bring the total number of designated product categories to 89.
- Conducting two successful, free 60-minute seminars, “Driving BioPreferred with the Presidential Memorandum” and “Cultivating Opportunities in the Biobased Marketplace,” via satellite/live streaming; the video recordings of these and past webinars are available on the BioPreferred website.
- Preparing a biobased products reporting template and developing a web-based tool to facilitate contractor reporting of annual biobased product purchases for the entire Federal government in concert with the Chief Acquisition Officers Council and OMB.

Baseline Compliance Level

The Department’s compliance level for including requirements and clauses for biobased products in contracts during the first two quarters of FY 2012 was 71 percent (based on a five percent sample).

FY 2013 Target and Future Compliance Goals

USDA plans to increase compliance to 85 percent in FY 2013 and achieve the 95 percent sustainability goal established in E.O. 13514 in FY 2014.

Strategies for Improving Compliance

Although well above the 50 percent threshold for developing a strategy to improve compliance, USDA has nevertheless decided to prepare a strategy to achieve the 95 percent goal contained in E.O. 13514 by FY 2014. As the Federal government lead for the Biobased Markets Program, we believe it is incumbent upon USDA to demonstrate leadership in this area.

USDA's strategy for improving the compliance level for including requirements and clauses for biobased products in contracts to achieve the 95 percent sustainable acquisition goal for biobased products includes the following elements:

- Developing and issuing sustainability scorecards for the six USDA agencies with the largest impact on Departmental sustainable operations. These scorecards will include the same status and progress scoring elements as the scorecard that OMB issues to USDA. The objective of issuing scorecards at this level is to increase accountability and provide an incentive to improve performance, thus playing an analogous role to higher level sustainability scorecards. In addition to improving biobased product sustainable acquisition performance, USDA agency scorecards should help improve performance in all sustainable practice areas.
- To bolster the scorecard approach above, USDA will also generate and disseminate USDA agency level reports on biobased compliance using data from newly created biobased reporting elements in the Federal Procurement Data System–Next Generation.
- USDA will revitalize its efforts to review and assess solicitation announcements in FedBizOps. Although the Department has conducted these reviews for a time, we will begin to follow up verbally and in writing with each USDA point of contact for solicitations with missing biobased clauses and language.
- USDA will update all contract templates on the BioPreferred website (<http://www.biopREFERRED.gov>). In addition, we will place USDA model contracts from our field offices with biobased language and clauses on the website and promote their use.
- As required by Section 3 of the Presidential Memorandum, USDA will amend its automated contract writing system, the Integrated Acquisition System, to serve as a model for biobased product procurement throughout the Federal Government by adding elements related to acquisition planning, evaluation factors for source selection, and specifications and requirements.
- To reward good behavior and encourage others to follow suit, the BioPreferred program will implement its newly established awards program (subject to the availability of funds) for USDA biobased champions under Section 9002(c) of the 2008 Farm Bill and make the awards ceremony a high profile event. In future years, USDA will expand the

awards program in two phases: (1) USDA plus other Federal agencies and (2) USDA plus other Federal agencies and stakeholder groups outside the government.

Required Specification Reviews

USDA has developed specifications for a handful of products such as the fire retardant the Forest Service uses to fight forest fires from the air. The Department's challenge in this area will be to identify all the products for which there may be USDA specifications because there is no central information repository for such specifications. Prior to the one year anniversary of the Presidential Memorandum (i.e., by February 21, 2013), USDA will identify products for which there are specifications and conduct reviews of 50 percent of those identified to ensure that biobased products are included as appropriate.